

What Dr. Grant said of the sponge fifty-three years ago (no. 1, p. 138), equally applies to it at the present day, viz.:—“This animal still affords many curious and interesting subjects of inquiry to those who have leisure and opportunities of examining the more perfect species of tropical seas [? in temperate ones too!]; and, though probably the simplest of animal organizations, the investigation of its living habits, its structure and vital phenomena, and the distinguishing character of its innumerable polymorphous species, is peculiarly calculated to illuminate the most obscure part of zoology, to exercise and invigorate our intellectual and physical powers, and to gratify the mind with the discovery of new scenes of infinite wisdom in the economy of Nature.”

XLIII.—*Preliminary Notice of a new Genus (Parectatosoma) of Phasmidæ from Madagascar, with brief Descriptions of its two Species.* By J. WOOD-MASON*.

THE interesting and remarkable animals briefly noticed below formed part of a large collection of insects, chiefly Coleoptera, recently received in London from Madagascar; and I was fortunate, while at home on furlough, to secure specimens of them from Mr. E. W. Janson, the well-known Natural-History agent.

They are unquestionably nearly related to *Ectatosoma*, an Australian genus, the three known members of which are three of the most curious and striking forms comprised in the whole class Insecta. This relationship I have indicated in the name of the new genus which the differences presented by these insects compel me to propose for their reception.

PARECTATOSOMA †, gen. nov.

Closely allied to the Australian genus *Ectatosoma*, but differing therefrom in the following characters:—The prothorax is relatively longer and more spiny; the male is devoid of ocelli, and, like the female, brachypterous; the abbreviated tegmina in both sexes are shorter than the abbreviated wings; and the upper crest of each of the femora is produced into a sharp genual spine.

Of the species of the Australian genus, *Ectatosoma bufo-*

* From the ‘Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,’ vol. xlvi. part ii. 1879, pp. 117, 118. Communicated by the Author.

† From *παρά*, by the side of, and *Ectatosoma*, generic name.

nium, Westw., is the one which the Madagascar forms most nearly approach.

1. *Parectatosoma hystrix*, n. sp.

♂ ♀. Head armed with 12 spines (besides scattered spinules) arranged in four longitudinal rows and in pairs, of which one is large, compressed, and thorny, and constitutes the conspicuous cephalic horn; the pair of spines immediately in front of these is also compound, each being provided with a sharp spine-like cusp in front. The post-antennary pair of spines is as well developed as in *Ectatosoma*.

Sides and upper surface of prothorax strongly armed with thorns, some of which are double. The apices of the small tegmina barely reaching the bases of the wings; the true metanotum is consequently exposed, and it is armed at the middle of its hinder margin with a pair of stout thorns. The tergum of the first somite and the terga of more or fewer (according to sex) of the remaining abdominal somites provided at their hinder extremities with two cross rows of spines. Posterior margin of tergum of last abdominal somite in the female symmetrically divided into six spinous processes.

Colour deep black-brown, almost black, blotched with yellow, sparingly so on the under surface and legs, but more profusely on the pronotum and on the terga of the abdominal somites, on which parts the colour assumes an orange tinge and extends to the points of the spines; the antennæ are ringed at the joints with the same colour; organs of flight greenish yellow, with their bases and principal nervures black.

♂. Length of body 61 millims., of head 7, pronotum 5, mesonotum 14, metanotum 7, abdomen $25+7=32$, tegmina 2.5, wings 8, fore femur 17, tibia 17.25, intermediate femur 13.5, tibia 15.5, posterior femur 17, tibia 21, antennæ 53.

♀. Length of body 86 millims., of head 10, pronotum 7, mesonotum 18, metanotum 10, abdomen $31.5+12.5=44$, tegmina 4.5, wings 10.5, fore femur 19, tibia 20, intermediate femur 16, tibia 18, posterior femur 21, tibia 25, antennæ imperfect.

Hab. Three males and three females from Fianarantsoa and one female from Antananarivo, Madagascar, differing from the rest only in being much more variegated.

2. *Parectatosoma echinus*, n. sp.

♂ ♀. Slenderer, and less numerously and less strongly spined than the preceding. Head armed: female with ten

spines, besides spinules, the cephalic horns more foliaceous and more sharply spined, with only one pair of spines in front of them instead of two, and that simple; male with eight only, one of the lateral pairs not being developed. Post-antennary spines reduced to minute tubercles. Vestiges of wings and tegmina larger, those of the latter overlapping one another and those of the former so as to conceal from view all but about one square millimetre of the unarmed metanotum. The tergum of the first abdominal somite with but one row of spines at its hinder end; that of the terminal somite of the female divided at its posterior margin into four spinous processes.

Colour. Body brown like rotten leaves, with the legs, antennæ, organs of flight (which have their principal nervures darker), and spines lighter.

♂. Length of body 64 millims., head 4·5, pronotum 4·5, mesonotum 14, metanotum 6, abdomen $27\cdot25 + 8\cdot5 = 35\cdot75$, tegmina 3·75, wings 7·3, fore femur 17, tibia 17, intermediate femur 12·5, tibia 13·5, posterior femur 17·5, tibia 19·5, antennæ 47.

♀. Length of body 80 millims., head 7, pronotum 6·5, mesonotum 16·5, metanotum 8, abdomen $31 + 12 = 43$, tegmina 6, wings 11, fore femur 16·6, tibia 17, intermediate femur 12·5, tibia 13·6, posterior femur 18, tibia 21, antennæ 43·5.

The fore legs and all the tibiæ in the male of this species are nearly quite simple.

Hab. One male and two females from Fianarántsoa.

XLIV.—*Monobia confluens*, a new *Moneron*.

By AIMÉ SCHNEIDER*.

[Plate XVIII.]

I NOW present the description of a new *Moneron*, which appears to me to possess some interest. The name I give it is in allusion to the community of life which is set up between the different individuals of the same group, the different members of a colony, as will be seen by-and-by.

Monobia confluens lives in fresh water, and perhaps also in moist earth. I met with it for the first time in June 1878. I have had living representatives of it for about a week in a

* Translated by W. S. Dallas, F.L.S., from the 'Archives de Zoologie expérimentale,' tom. vii. (1878) p. 585.